

Philosophy

The character progression and mechanics presented below are intended to be useful to both characters intending to be mostly rune mages and those that pick up the Art for enhancing their combat or other talents. In the story, this shows up over and over (like Tarkin's rangers). So, notice that even one level of rune mage means you'll be able to augment your damage by 2d6 almost continuously (keeping in mind the issue of Twilight); see the section on character progression after the Casting Mechanics.

Rune magic

Casting can either be **spontaneous** or **formulaic**. Spontaneous means you made up the spell on the spot. Formulaic means you actually have the exact spell in your spell book.

Casting is done by constructing noun and verb combinations.

There are four verbs:

Creo, Muto, Perdo, Rego
or
Create, Change, Destroy, Control

There are eight nouns:

Terram, Auram, Ignem, Aquam, Herbam, Animal, Vim, Imaginem, Mentem, Corpus
or
Earth, Air, Fire, Water, Plant, Animal, Power, Illusion, Mind and Body

Spell Level can be 1 – 40+.

Spell Magnitude is Spell Level/5.

Thus, Magnitude is almost identical to the D&D Spell Level. A 40th Level Spell has a Magnitude of 8 and is roughly as powerful (actually slightly more) than a D&D 8th level spell. We need to preserve this double numbering system for the rolls, below.

Casting Mechanics

1) Spontaneous spells (you just thought it up on the spot and don't know anything similar):

$$\text{Spell level} = (\text{d10} + \text{Verb} + \text{Noun} + \text{Int bonus}) / 5$$

OR

$$\text{Spell level} = (\text{d10} + \text{Verb} + \text{Noun} + \text{Int bonus}) / 2$$

*if you choose to lose 5*spell magnitude in hp*

2) Spontaneous spell but you have a similar spell in your spellbook:

$$\text{Spell level} = (\text{d10} + \text{Verb} + \text{Noun} + \text{Int bonus} + \text{magntiude of similar spell})/2$$

3) Formulaic spell:

$$\text{Spell level} = (\text{d10} + \text{Verb} + \text{Noun} + \text{Con} + \text{Int})$$

Damage: A spell can do 2d6 per Magnitude MAX but you can *choose* to roll less die.

Range, Duration: There are guidelines for this for different verbs and nouns in the Ars Magica pdf.

For example:

Josephus wants to cast a fireball. His Creo is +3, Ignem +5 and he has 18 Intelligence (+3) and Constitution 12 (+1).

1a) If he doesn't know a similar spell (nothing with Creo or Ignem) and doesn't want to lose hp:
Spell Level = $(d10 + 11) / 5 = 4$; Max would be a level 4 spell which would do 2d6.

1b) If he elects to lose hp:
Spell Level = $(d10 + 11) / 2 = 10$; Max would be a level 10 spell which would do 4d6
AND the wizard loses $5 * 2 = 10$ hp; the hp loss depends on the roll, as shown.

2) Josephus knows a spell called *Lighting the Candles* which is weak (Mag 1), but similar.
Spell Level = $(d10 + 11 + 1) / 2 = 11$; Max would be a level 11 spell which would do 4d6.
Notice he did not lose hp.

3) Josephus knows a spell called *Launching my Fiery Balls* which is medium strength (Level 15).
Spell Level = $(d10 + 11 + 1 + 3) = 25$; Max would be a level 25 spell which would do 10d6. No hit point loss.

Leveling

The assumption is that a 20th level rune mage will be able to cast a 45th level spell (approx 9th level D&D) if he specialized in **ONLY** one noun and one verb the whole time. This makes sense since that means he'll be able to cast quite a number of them per day.

-So, at 20th level this uber-specialized wizard, on average, can cast:
Spell Level = $5 + \text{noun} + \text{verb} = 5 + 20 + 20 = 45$

- On a roll of 10, he would cast a level 50 spell or 20d6 damage.

-That also means he'll be able to spontaneously cast
Spell Level = $5 + 20 + 20 + 3 = 48/5 = 9$.
That's a Magnitude 2 spell or 4d6, which he could do constantly.

Given this:

Every level of rune mage gives you 3 points to spend on nouns/forms.

In order to get a feel for the system, the following table shows you what this specialized mage can do at levels between 1 and 20 for spontaneous and formulaic casting for rolls of 1, 5 and 10.

Level	Spontaneous						Formulaic					
Lvl / Dmg →	1		5		10		1		5		10	
1	1	2d6	2	2d6	3	2d6	7	2d6	11	4d6	16	6d6
2	2	2d6	3	2d6	4	2d6	10	4d6	14	6d6	19	8d6
3	3	2d6	3	2d6	4	2d6	13	6d6	17	6d6	22	8d6
4	3	2d6	4	2d6	5	2d6	16	6d6	20	8d6	25	10d6
5	4	2d6	5	2d6	6	2d6	19	8d6	23	10d6	28	12d6
10	7	2d6	8	4d6	9	4d6	34	14d6	38	16d6	43	18d6
15	10	4d6	11	4d6	12	4d6	49	20d6	53	22d6	58	24d6
20	13	6d6	14	6d6	15	6d6	64	26d6	68	28d6	73	30d6

Other ways of progressing

This part is important. I plan to pace the game so that rune mages can devote time now and then (seasons) augmenting their magic skills. This is not intended to be role-played or slow down the game. The assumption is that the party, in between missions, can spend time studying information and studying spells, weird devices and increasing rune magic power. The mechanic for this is the Laboratory Roll, in the Ars Magica pdf. I will not go into this here. Suffice to say there are plenty of books in your new, unexplored home base to augment skills. Further, I plan to pace the campaign so that this is possible, mainly because, as you will learn, there is some Birthright-type stuff to be done in the lands outside your new covenant.

So: Those of you which become dedicated Rune Mages will be able to progress faster and have more variety than you can get from the character class points. This allows us the flexibility I discussed in the Philosophy section.

Wisdom points

Lastly, anyone can trade wisdom points for noun or verb points on a one-to-one basis BEFORE THE NEXT SESSION AND NEVER AGAIN.